

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 06002 200254Z

61

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCV-01 ISO-00 NEA-10 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE*00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 M

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, TS, US

SUBJECT: HABIB BOURGUIBA JR. HOLDS PRESS CONFERENCE

1. HABIB BOURGUIBA JR, WHO RETURNED OCT 17 FROM U.S. VISIT, HELD LENGTHY PRESS CONFERENCE MORNING OCT 18. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS BASED ON LOCAL PRESS REPORTS.

2. HE DESCRIBED NUMEROUS CONTACTS HE HAD AND IMPRESSIONS HE GATHERED ON U.S. ATTITUDE TOWARD MIDDLE EAST WAR. HE SAID PRO-ISRAELI PRESS CONTINUED TO "CONDITION" THINKING OF AMERICAN PUBLIC BUT THERE HAD BEEN DISCERNIBLE CHANGE SINCE WAR BEGAN, ADDING THERE IS PROGRESSIVE CHANGE BECAUSE OF DESTRUCTION OF CERTAIN MYTHS WHICH WERE FAVORABLE TO ISRAEL.

3. BOURGUIBA JR SPOKE WARMLY OF HIS VISIT TO DEPARTMENT AND MEETING WITH HIS OLD FRIENDS, IN PARTICULAR SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER. HE SAID ATTENTION GIVEN BY THEM TO HIS VIEWS ON ME SITUATION WAS FLATTERING*. IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS ON U.S. SUPPLY OF ARMS TO ISRAEL WHILE AT SAME TIME SEEKING PEACE SETTLEMENT, BOURGUIBA JR SAID USG WAS "DUPED OVER MANY YEARS BY PRO-ISRAELI PROPAGANDA AND MOMENTUM OF THIS WAS STILL EVIDENT. HE THOUGHT RECENT STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT NIXON WOULD HAVE POSITIVE EFFECT ON PUBLIC OPINION AND THIS COULD INFLUENCE ATTITUDE OF CONGRESS. HE CITED SENATOR FULBRIGHT STATEMENT

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PAGE 02 TUNIS 06002 200254Z

THAT "SEVENTY PER CENT OF CONGRESS WAS UNDER INFLUENCE OF

PRO-ZIONIST ORGANIZATIONS".

4. ON SOVIET ASSISTANCE TO ARABS, HE SAID THIS WAS GREAT OBSESSION OF AMERICAN LEADERS AND HE IMPLIED THIS PARTLY EXPLAINED U.S. DECISION TO RESUPPLY ISRAEL.

5. ON CONTACTS WITH TUNISIAN-AMERICAN ASSOCIATION, BOURGUIBA JR DESCRIBED CONDUCT OF TWO MEMBER AS HYSTERICAL WITH REGARD TO CURRENT TUNISIAN POSITION ON WAR AND SAID THEY HAD DECLARED THEY WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE HN ASSOCIATION AND WOULD WORK FOR ITS DISSOLUTION. HE SAID HE RECEIVED A TELEGRAM OF INSULTS FROM ONE MEMBER WHICH HE ANSWERED IN MORE MODERATE TONE BY LETTER. HE SAID MOST MEMBERS OF ASSOCIATION WERE WILLING LISTEN TO HIS VIEWS AND HE FORESAW NO CHANGE IN BASIC OBJECTIVES TWO ASSOCIATIONS WILL WORK TOWARD.

6. IN ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NEED FOR CHANGE IN US-TUNISIAN RELATIONS, BOURGUIBA JR SAID THERE NO REASON FOR TUNISIA TO* CHANGE RELATIONS BUT COULD ONLY HOPE U.S. WOULD NOW OPEN ITS EYES AND CHANGE ITS ME POLICY. COURGUIBA JR EARLIER SAID HE HAD CONFIDENCE IN U.S. SPIRIT OF AIR PLAY AND JUSTICE AND WHEN AMERICAN PEOPLE SEE HOW THEY HAVE BEEN "BRAINWASHED" BY ISRAELI PROPAGANDA THEY WILL CHANGE THEIR VIEWS.

7. COMMENT: FRIENDLY JOURNALISTS WHO ATTENDED CONFERENCE BELIEVE BOURGUIBA JR DID SKILLFUL JOB IN DESCRIBING MOOD IN U.S. AND ITS EFFECT ON OSD0Z** H *6 **G3*****IW*HSRAEL. HE OBVIOUSLY WAS ON SPOT TO EXPLAIN HOW TUNISIA CONTINUES GOOD RELATIONS WITH U.S.0*N FACE OF OUR CURRENT ARMS"ASSISTANCE TO ISRAEL, AND HIS CALL TO GIVE U.S. TIME TO OVERCOME "PRO-ISRAELI CONDITAONING" REFLECTED HIS BASICALLY PRO-AMERICAN ATTITUDES. SE5LYE

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